



LOVE LIZZIE, LETTERS TO A MILITARY MOM- LESSON PLAN

Activity Plan

Project Skills:

- Youth will learn about the importance of communication
- Youth will learn about the night sky

Life Skills:

- Learning to Learn
- Thinking Creatively
- Communicating with others

Grade Levels: 2-4

Time: 1 hour

Supplies Needed:

- *Love, Lizzie Letters to a Military Mom* by Lisa Tucker McElroy (ISBN 0-8075-4777-8)
- *Night Catch* by Brenda Ehrmantraut (ISBN 0-9729833-9-2)
- Star Wheel instructions, disk and sleeve pages- copies of each for all participants
- Markers
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Table clothes
- Scissors
- Staplers
- Brown paper lunch bags (3 per participant)
- Sturdy hole punches
- Ribbon, various colors and sizes

BACK GROUND

Nine year old Lizzie is missing her mom who is deployed overseas. Lizzie writes letters sharing events and what's happening at home. She often includes a map. Lizzie receives a map from her mother which brings the book to a conclusion, reuniting Lizzie and her mom.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Read *Love Lizzie Letters to a Military Mom*

Have the youth look at the book jacket and have them tell you what they think the book is about. Read the book out loud.

While reading, show the youth the different illustrations in the book and allow the youth to share their ideas and questions about the letters and maps Lizzie sends her mother. When finished reading the book, allow the youth time to share what they thought would happen when Lizzie received the letter from Mrs. Collins.

Activity: Make a journal

Writing in a journal is a great way to communicate. A journal can be written in by many people, like a conversation, one person, to share his or her opinions and feelings, or to draw pictures or record quotes.

Each youth needs three brown paper lunch bags. Youth should follow directions below for ordering the bags. Each bag should be folded in half and stacked together like a book. On the folded edge side, youth should make five hole punches (this can be difficult, adult help may be necessary). Youth should add ribbon to secure their journal together and can decorate as they like.



Do Ahead:

- Read book(s) to become familiar with the story.
- Make copies of star wheel instructions, disk, and sleeve.
- Make copies of journal instructions.

Sources/Adapted From:

- Created by Laura Pettersen, 4-H Youth Development Project Educator, UW-Extension
- “Introducing a New Book” under “Helpful Hints” as adapted from the Michigan Team Nutrition Booklist, Michigan Team Nutrition, Family and Consumer Sciences, Michigan State University, 2002.
- Make a Star Wheel, adapted from the editors of Sky and Telescope Magazine online, http://www.skyandtelescope.com/letsgo/familyfun/Make_a_Star_Wheel.html, December 30, 2010

Activity: Read *Night Catch* by Brenda Ehrmantraut

If time permits, Read *Night Catch*. Ask youth what special activity they share with a parent. Discuss the north star and refer back to the pages of *Love Lizzie* that refer to the north star. Share with youth that everyone in the northern hemisphere (above the equator) can see the north star.

Help youth create a star wheel to share with their loved ones. A template and information are available at:

http://www.skyandtelescope.com/letsgo/familyfun/Make_a_Star_Wheel.html

TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

Ask youth:

- What are some things that are difficult about having someone you love away from home/deployed?
- Why is it important to communicate whether someone is near or far?
- What important things does Lizzie share with her mom through letters and maps?

Apply:

- How do you communicate with your loved ones?
- What is a special activity you share with a loved one?

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**Enhance for Older Children:**

- Make a more complicated journal. Many ideas and templates are available online.
- Invite a teen who experienced the deployment of a parent to share their story with the group.
- Further investigate the night sky through books, movies, the internet, or a speaker.

Simplify for Younger Children:

- Pre-make journals and allow youth to decorate them.
- Investigate seasonal constellations through a slide show to help youth identify two to three in the night sky.

HELPFUL HINTS

Introducing a New Book

Use these basic pre-reading strategies to get students interested in a new book before reading it:

- Examine the cover to predict what the book will be about.
- Read the title of the book to, or together with youth.
- Identify the author and illustrator.
- Introduce important concepts and vocabulary words that might be confusing to youth prior to reading the book.

While reading:

- Stop at appropriate times to allow for participation and discussion.
- Encourage youth to interact with the text while listening to it. This helps them to understand and remember the important points.

After reading:

- Provide youth with time to reflect on the book.
- Ask them to describe their favorite part or to share something new that they learned in the story.

ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

The following are websites related to Operation Military Kids and the 4-H Youth Development Program:

National Operation Military Kids Program:

<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx>

Wisconsin Operation Military Kids Programs:

<http://www.operationmilitarykids.org/public/home.aspx>

National 4-H Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/>

Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development:

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/index.cfm>



An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and American with Disabilities (ADA) requirements. © 2005 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Developed by the Wisconsin 4-H Office, 431 Lowell Hall, 610 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53703. The 4-H name and emblem are federally protected under Title 18 US Code 707.